

Italian Travelers to
CALIFORNIA

Prepared for
California Tourism



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ITALIAN TRAVELERS TO CALIFORNIA

Total Market. Of 546,000 Italian visitors to the U.S., 19.5%, or 106,000 visited California in 2005. This represented an 8% decrease from 2004, and a drop of 45% from the peak year of 1998. Italian arrival volumes at California ports-of-entry are showing a decrease in 2006 after increasing for the last three years.

	Visitors to CA from Italy (est.)	Italy to CA as % of total US
1994	150,000	28.4%
1995	159,000	30.2%
1996	159,000	30.2%
1997	191,000	33.0%
1998	194,000	31.7%
1999	190,000	30.3%
2000	167,000	27.2%
2001	118,000	24.9%
2002	93,000	22.8%
2003	75,000	18.3%
2004	115,000	24.5%
2005	106,000	19.5%

Main Destination. Most of Italian visitors to California (88%) reported California was the main destination of their U.S. trip.

Purpose of Trip. Among all Italian visitors to California in 2005, 60% reported vacation/holiday was one of their major reasons for traveling. Other reasons for traveling included visiting friends/relatives (37%), business (26%), and attending a convention (11%).

Port of Entry. A combined total of 50% of Italian visitors to California entered the U.S. through west coast ports. Almost one-third (30%) entered through Los Angeles, followed by San Francisco (20%). The third highest port was New York which processed 18% of Italian visitors to California.

Top Metropolitan Areas Visited in California. Italian visitors to California in 2005 tended to center their trip itineraries on the major cities of Los Angeles (59%), San Francisco (59%), and San Diego (16%).

Leisure/Recreation Activities. The top leisure and recreation activities reported by visitors from Italy were shopping, dining and visiting small towns. Italian travelers are more likely to visit small towns, amusement or theme parks, or national parks than most other overseas visitors.

Advance Trip Decision. In total, Italian travelers to California reported making their trip decision 87 days in advance of their trip. This is almost the same average trip decision time as the 90 days reported by all overseas visitors to California.

Means of Booking Air Trip. Almost half of Italian travelers to California (48%) booked their air trip via a travel agent. This was lower than the other major overseas markets to California (57%).

Means of Booking Lodging. In 2005, 28% of Italian visitors to California reported booking their lodging through a travel agent, while 17% reported booking their lodging through a tour operator. This was the highest use of a tour operator for booking lodging of any major overseas visitor market.

Trip Information Sources. Among Italian visitors to California, the most frequently mentioned sources of information included: a travel agency (61%), followed by personal computer (41%), direct information from airlines (9%), and friends or relatives (8%).

Length of Stay. Italian visitors stayed an average of 25.5 nights in the U.S. and 16.2 nights in California. In comparison the length of stay for all overseas visitors to California was 10.6 nights in the state.

Sex and Age. Men comprised 61% of Italian travelers to California and their median age was 37 years. This is less than the median age of 42 years reported by all overseas male visitors to California. Women represented 39% of all Italian travelers to California in 2005 and their median age was 33 years. The median age reported by all overseas female visitors to California was 40 years.

Travel Party Size. Nearly all (93%) of Italian travel groups consisted of adults only. Only 7% of Italian travel groups to California included children. The mean travel party size for all Italian visitors to the state was 1.6 people, compared to a mean travel party size of 1.5 people for all overseas visitors to California.

Annual Household Income. Visitors from Italy reported lower average median household incomes (\$64,300) relative to all overseas visitors to California (\$78,800).

Accommodations. Three-fourths of Italian visitors (75%) to California chose a hotel or motel as their primary type of accommodation during their stay in 2005. This proportion is slightly smaller than the 79% reported by all overseas visitors to California. Over one-third (34%) of Italian visitors stayed in a private home in 2005, compared to 30% for all overseas travelers to California.

Use of Prepaid Package. In 2005, 23% of Italian visitors used prepaid packages. This was higher than the 15% of all overseas visitors to California who reported using prepaid packages.

Expenditures. Visitors to California from Italy spent an estimated 161 million dollars in California in 2005. Italian visitors were spending an average of \$94 per day during their visit, compared to \$103 for all overseas visitors. Each visitor to California from Italy spent an average of \$1,523 in the state.

Average International Airfare. Average international airfare to the U.S. was \$1,428 for Italian visitors, which was lower than the \$1,821 average international airfare reported by all overseas visitors to California during 2005.